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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [JO](#)  
SUBJECT: JORDAN FM SUMMONS P5 AMBASSADORS TO PROTEST  
ISRAELI STRIKES ON GAZA

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4 b and d

11. (C) Ambassador and the representatives of other P5 countries were summoned the afternoon of December 27 by Jordan's Foreign Minister Salah Al-Bashir, who registered his country's protest of Israel's "disproportionate" and "indiscriminate" bombing in Gaza. Ambassador pointed out that the strikes came in response to Hamas' many rocket and mortar attacks and specifically targeted security compounds, a point seconded--rather surprisingly--by the Russian Ambassador. Bashir responded that the ambassadors should watch the televised footage of the impact of the strikes, asserting that the 160 casualties reported at the time of the conversation were "way too much" and that the "Israelis were over the top." Immediately following the meeting, in a private conversation with Ambassador, Bashir expressed concerns that the Israeli actions would put moderate Arab states in difficult positions with their publics and with the more militant states in the region, particularly at the upcoming Arab League Ministerial.

12. (U) In reaction to the Gaza strikes, thousands of people demonstrated in cities and refugee camps across Jordan on December 27 and 28, according to press reports. Protests were scheduled December 28 at universities in Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid, and the Jordanian Professional Associations called for a sit-in in front of the Egyptian Embassy. There were also calls, including by a group of Jordanian MPs, to expel the Israeli Ambassador and for Jordan and other Arab countries to end diplomatic relations with Israel.  
Beecroft